

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

0201465004
AA-32-T-b
(Map 26)
(146)

MAGI# 0201465004

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

AA-146

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

"Java", Contee House (RUIN)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Contees Wharf Road, near Rhode River

CITY, TOWN

Edgewater

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Anne Arundel

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT

☐ BUILDING(S)

☐ STRUCTURE

☒ SITE

☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC

☒ PRIVATE

☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS

☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED

☒ UNOCCUPIED

☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED

☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED

☒ NO

PRESENT USE

☒ AGRICULTURE

☐ MUSEUM

☐ COMMERCIAL

☐ PARK

☐ EDUCATIONAL

☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

☐ ENTERTAINMENT

☐ RELIGIOUS

☐ GOVERNMENT

☐ SCIENTIFIC

☐ INDUSTRIAL

☐ TRANSPORTATION

☐ MILITARY

☐ OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Y. Kirkpatrick-Howat

Telephone #: 798-0340

STREET & NUMBER

Box 85

CITY, TOWN

Edgewater

VICINITY OF

Maryland STATE zip code 21037

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Liber #: RGP4/371

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Map #60, AD #1, Parcel #415

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

7 DESCRIPTION**CONDITION**

—EXCELLENT
—GOOD
—FAIR

—DETERIORATED
☒RUINS
—UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

—UNALTERED
☒ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ORIGINAL SITE
—MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

At present only the chimneys remain of this circa 1700 brick house, standing on a hilltop, overlooking the Rhode River.

The basic plan of the structure was a two-and-a-half story, gambrel roofed main house with a small one-and-a-half story; gambrel roof kitchen connected to its north end by a low hyphen.

In the early 1890's, the house was struck by lightening, caught fire and was partially destroyed. The roof and the interior framing fell and the front and rear walls collapsed. The owners were away at the time but sent instructions to have the house rebuilt. Unfortunately, the job was poorly done; the old, fire-damaged brick was reused, and several changes were made to the style of the house: the fenestration pattern is more modern; several bow windows were added and the new roof dormers were built as "eyebrow" dormers rather than the more typical shed dormers. The hyphen between house and kitchen does not appear to be as old as the original structure and it may also have been added at this time.

In 1917, the house and the surrounding farm were bought by Elizabeth F. Gordon, mother of the present owner. She lived in the house for several years but eventually abandoned it. The house was in need of restoration and virtual rebuilding. The front and rear walls, poorly reconstructed after the fire, were weak and it was considered necessary to replace them with new brick. Needless to say, the project was never undertaken and the house slowly began to decay.

The name of the builder of "Java" is not known but the land was occupied from 1652 to 1725 by three generations of the Sparrow family. Thomas Sparrow II leased a portion of the land in 1712. The wording of the lease (Deeds IB 2/76) indicates that Sparrow was living in a "Mansion House" at the time.

The estate passed to the Macubbin and Carroll families for the remainder of the 18th century.

The name "Java" was given to the house when it was purchased in 1819 by John Contee. A lieutenant in the U.S. Navy during the war of 1812, Contee, commanding the USS Constitution, was responsible for the capture of HMS Java. The bounty money financed Contee's move to Rhode River.

Contee's Wharf, located at the end of the road below the house, was used throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. The 1878 County map shows a store and several other buildings near the landing.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1859 the farm was divided between Contee's two sons, Richard contee sold his portion including the house, in 1885. The property changed hand several times until acquired by Mrs. Gordon in 1917. The farm now consists of 212 acres, predominantly pasture and woodland. The largest black walnut in the U.S. (see Besley, Champion Trees) is located in the pasture north of the house.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATAACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 212 acres**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

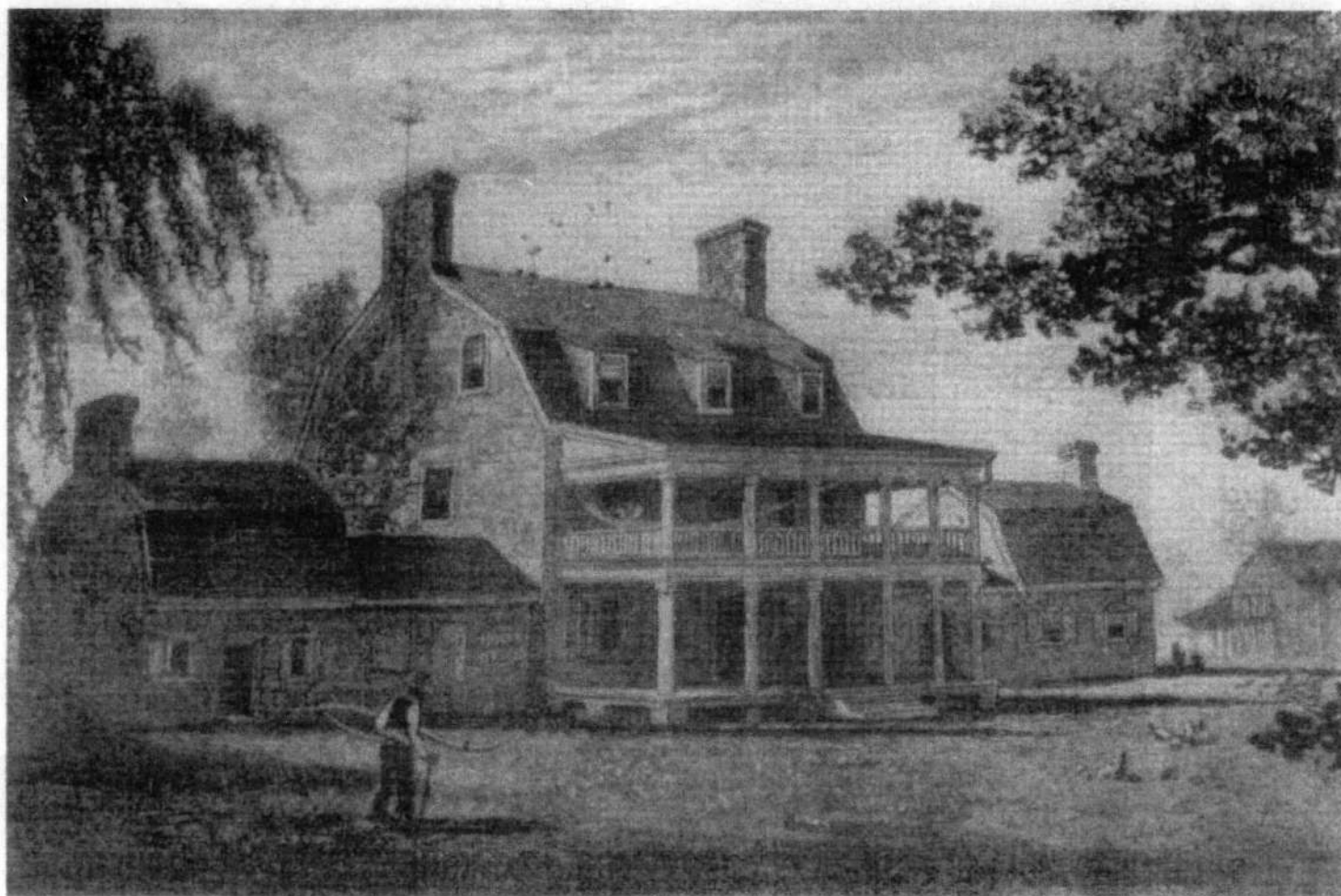
CITY OR TOWN

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

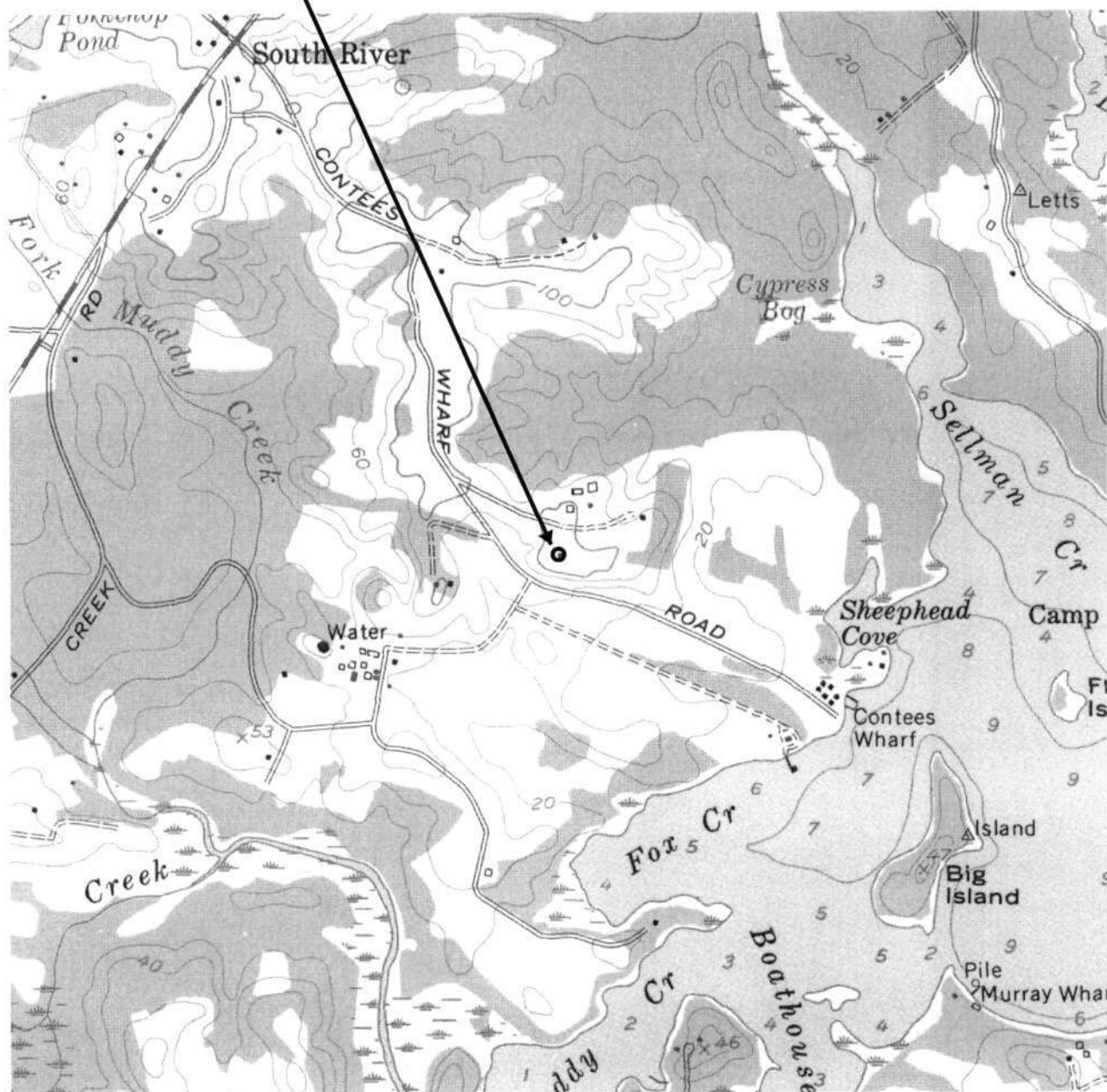
RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438



Artist's sketch of Java Mansion from Century Magazine, 1884. Courtesy of Betsy Kirkpatrick-Howat

Figure 45: 1880s sketch of the Java Site, reproduced from Byron Lee's Anne Arundel County History Notes article (July 2004.)

AA-146
Java (Contee House)
Contees Wharf Road
Edgewater
South River Quad





AA - 146

"Contee"

14A Co

by Orlando Ridout V

Feb 1971

view from west